

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 HONG K 07638 011239Z  
ACTION SS-25

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P R 010945Z JUL 77  
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5554  
INFO USLO PEKING  
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

S E C R E T HONG KONG 7638

EXDIS

E. . 11652: XGDS-2  
TAGS: PGOV, PROP, CH, US  
SUBJ: FEI COMMENTS ON U.S./PRC RELATIONS

1. ON JULY 1, I CALLED ON TA KUNG PAO PUBLISHER FEI I-MIN TO DISCUSS MY RECENT CONSULATATIONS IN WASHINGTON. DRAWING UPON MY DISCUSSIONS IN THE DPEARTMENT, I NOTED THAT A STUDY OF OUR CHINA POLICY HAS BEEN CONDUCTED WITH GREAT SERIOUSNESS AND WAS NOW BEING REVIEWED AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS IN WASHINGTON. OUR POLICY, I SAID, WAS BASED NOT ONLY ON BILATERAL CONSIDERATIONS, BUT AS THE SECRETARY HAD INDICATED, ON GLOBAL CONSIDERATIONS, AS WELL. I POINTED OUT THAT THE U.S. AND THE PRC, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE DIFFERING SOCIAL SYSTEMS, SHARE CERTAIN INTERESTS ALREADY AND WE HOPE THROUGH THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO FIND OTHER AREAS WHERE OUR OUTLOOK IS SINILAR. FEI REACTED WITHA PHRASE OF CHOU EN-LAI'S MEANING WE SHOULD SEEK AREAS OF AGREEMENT AND PUT DISAGREEMENTS ASIDE. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE FULLY UNDERSTOOD THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OUR TWO SYSTEMS, NOTING OUR CONCERNS WITH PUBLIC OPINION AND CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES. I AGREED, ADDING THAT COMMENTS BY PRC LEADERS TO THE EFFECT THAT FORCE WOULD PROBABLY BE NECESSARY IN THE LIBERATION OF TAIWAN ONLY MADE THE PROBLEM MORE DIFFICULT.

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2. FEI RESPONDED THAT HE SOMETIMES THOUGHT THERE WAS TOO MUCH CONCERN IN THE UNITED STATES ABOUT THE FATE OF THE PEOPLE ON TAIWAN. "THE TAIWANESE ARE OUR BROTHERS, WE DON'T WANT TO KILL THEM". HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SEVERAL SENIOR CHINESE OFFICIALS HAD INDICATED THAT FORCE WOULD BE REQUIRED IN THE LIBERATION OF TAIWAN, BUT MADE AN APPEAL FOR THE TWO SIDES TO "FIND A WAY" DURING THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE.

IT WAS IN THIS CONTEXT THAT HE WAS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE SECRETARY'S SPEECH BECAUSE THERE WAS PRACTICALLY NO REFERENCE TO THE TAIWAN QUESTION AND A FIRM COMMITMENT TO THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE. HE PARTICULARLY NOTED THE REFERENCE TO SETTLEMENT OF THE TAIWAN QUESTION BY THE CHINESE THEMSELVES. HE TERMED THIS APPROACH "EXACTLY RIGHT" AND INDICATED THAT THE TWO SIDES SHOULD ENDEAVOR TO FIND LANGUAGE SIMILAR TO THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE TO RESOLVE REMAINING PROBLEMS. INTERESTINGLY, HE SPECIFICALLY ASKED THAT HIS GRATIFICATION AT THE CONTENTS OF THE SPEECH BE CONVEYED TO WASHINGTON, INDICATING HE UNDERSTOOD THAT EVERYTHING HE SAID WOULD BE REPORTED AND THAT HE WAS REFLECTING A GENERAL CHINESE APPROVAL OF THE SPEECH.

3. RETURNING TO THE QUESTION OF TAIWAN, FEI ACKNOWLEDGED AS "A FACT" THAT THE STANDARD OF LIVING IN TAIWAN IS CONSIDERABLY HIGHER THAN THAT ON THE MAINLAND. IF THE LEADERS IN TAIPEI AND PEKING COULD BEGIN A DIALOGUE WAYS COULD BE FOUND TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THESE DIFFERENCES. HE ARGUED THAT PEKING HAS NOWISH TO DESTROY THE PRESENT STANDARD OF LIVING ON TAIWAN AND CHARACTERIZED CHOU EN-LAI AS TELLING HIM THAT THE PRC APPROACH WOULD BE LIKE TWO CONTAINERS OF WATER CONNECTED TOGETHER WHICH GRADUALLY SEEK A COMMON LEVEL. "SPEAKING PERSONALLY", FEI SAID HE THOUGHT THIS PROCESS WOULD TAKE A MINIMUM OF TWENTY YEARS AND THAT THE PRC WOULD BE WILLING TO GRANT TAIWAN A SPECIAL STATUS AS AN AUTONOMOUS DISTRICT DURING THIS TRANSITION STAGE. UNFORTUNATELY FOR THIS RATHER OPTIMISTIC  
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PROJECTION OF PEACE AND HARMONY, FEI USED TIBET PRE-1959 TAKEOVER AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE RELATIONSHIP HE ENVISAGED.

4. THROUGHOUT THE DISCUSSION, FEI INSISTED THAT A MAJOR PROBLEM WAS THE UNWILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF LEADERS IN TAIPEI TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE PRC. THIS INTRANSIGENCE, HE CLAIMED, WAS BASED ON THE FACT THAT ROC LEADERS FELT UNDER NO PRESSURE TO NEGOTIATE SO LONG AS THEY HAVE A MILITARY COMMITMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES FOR THE DEFENSE OF TAIWAN. FEI ARGUED THAT IF THIS COMMITMENT WERE WITHDRAWN TAIPEI WOULD FEEL COMPELLED TO NEGOTIATE WITH PEKING AND PROGRESS COULD BEGIN TOWARD REACHING A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. THUS BY REMOVING THE COMMITMENT, THE U.S. WAS NOT "ABANDONING" TAIWAN BECAUSE IT WOULD PUSH TAIPEI INTO DOING THE ONE THING WHICH WOULD MAKE THE USE OF FORCE UNNECESSARY. ALTHOUGH THIS SOUNDS SOMEWHAT THREATENING, FEI SEEMED TO BE SAYING THAT THE QUESTION OF USE OF FORCE WOULD NOT ARISE AS LONG AS THERE WAS A POSSIBILITY OF A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT AND THAT POSSIBILITY WOULD EXIST AS LONG AS A DIALOGUE WAS IN PROGRESS NO MATTER HOW LONG IT TOOK. I DID NOT COMMENT ON THIS.

5. FEI I-MIN IS ONE OF THE PRC'S TOP UNITED FRONT MEN IN

HONG KONG AND HIS EMPHASIS ON A PEACEFUL SOLUTION THROUGH  
NEGOTIATION IS NOT SURPRISING. HE HAS TAKEN THE SAME GENERAL  
LINE WITH OTHERS HERE, BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME HE HAS  
DISCUSSED U.S./PRC BILATERAL RELATIONS SO OPENLY WITH ME.  
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## Message Attributes

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